

We claim:

1. Method of treating pathological conditions characterized by an increased IL-1 and/or TNF- α level which comprises administering to a subject having such condition a therapeutically effective amount of at least one member selected from the group consisting of diacerein and rhein in a pharmaceutical dosage form.
2. The method of claim 1 wherein said pathological condition is an inflammatory or autoimmune disease.
3. The method of claim 1 wherein said condition is selected from the group consisting of rheumatoid arthritis, psoriatic arthritis, Wegener's disease, granulomatosis, asthma, pulmonary emphysema, Paget's disease, osteoporosis, bone metastases, atherosclerosis, myeloma and myeloid leukemia.
4. The method of claim 1 wherein said group member is diacerein.
5. The method of claim 1 wherein said therapeutically effective amount is a daily dose of about 25 to about 500 mg of said group member.

6. The method of claim 1 wherein each unit dose of said pharmaceutical dosage form contains about 5 to about 500 mg of said group member.

7. The method of claim 1 wherein each unit dose of said pharmaceutical dosage form contains about 20 mg to about 200 mg of said group member.

8. The method of claim 1 wherein each unit dose of said pharmaceutical dosage form contains about 5 to about 100 mg of said group member.

9. The method of claim 1 where each unit dose of said pharmaceutical dosage form contains about 50 mg of said group member.

10. The method of claim 1 wherein said dosage form is a capsule.

11. Method of treating inflammatory and autoimmune conditions characterized by an increased IL-1 and or TNF α level which comprises modifying the production or action of proinflammatory cytokines including said IL-1 and/or TNF α by administering to a subject having such condition a therapeutically effective amount of at least one member selected from the group consisting of diacerein and rhein in a pharmaceutical dosage form.

12. The method of claim 11 wherein said group member is diacerein.
13. The method of claim 11 wherein said condition is rheumatoid arthritis.
14. Method for reducing the synthesis of IL-1 and TNF α which comprises administering to a subject a therapeutically effective amount of at least one member selected from the group consisting of diacerein and rhein in a pharmaceutical dosage form.